

Horatio West Court Apartments  
140 Hollister Street  
Santa Monica  
Los Angeles County  
California

HABS No. CA-1984

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CAL,  
19-SANMO,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

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WRITTEN ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HORATIO WEST COURT APARTMENTS

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Location: 140 Hollister Street, Santa Monica, Los Angeles County, California.

Present Owner: Joseph Rosenthal.

Present Occupant: Joseph Rosenthal and others.

Present Use: Apartments.

Significance: An early example of social housing in the International style. In the second story living rooms, Gill used continuous windows--a hallmark of the International style--for the first time in his career.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1919 (from interviews with various architects associated with Gill.) See Sources of Information. This date also appears in Richard Neutra's volume Amerika as the date.
2. Architect: Irving John Gill.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The apartments are located on lots 7, 8, and 9 of the Wadsworth and Hollister Tract, Block 2, Parcel 5. When built, the structure was located in the town of Ocean Park, which was subsequently annexed by Santa Monica.  
Owners:  
1919 - Horatio D. West  
1948 - Harry and Rose Offner  
1950 - Joseph Rosenthal
4. Builder: Freeman & Company. According to Richard Neutra, in his work Amerika, the original cost was \$32,000.
5. Original plans and construction: All of Irving Gill's plans for his work in Los Angeles, after he moved there from San Diego in 1914, were destroyed. The walls of the apartments are double layer reinforced concrete. At the center of the walls is a felt membrane between a latticing which is spanned by metal webbing. Reinforcing is 1/2" square steel bars, 12" apart. Sliding form work was used in the construction. The arrangement is that of two pairs of two-story houses facing a court. Attached garages at the rear of both rows have apartments above. Living rooms of the two-story houses were originally on the second floor, where they had views of the sea and mountains.

6. Alterations and additions:

1922 - New garages were added at the rear of the drives. The cost was \$2,500, and the contractor was Freedman and Company.

1923 - Porch added at cost of \$600. Freeman and Company, contractor. Other alterations and repairs at this time cost \$500.

1924 - Repairs \$200. Contractor Paul Moffett.

At some later time, perhaps when the name of the court was changed to El Consuelo Apartments in 1927, each house was divided to make separate first and second floor apartments.

Prepared by: Ester McCoy  
July 1968

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Horatio West Court Apartments are typical of Gill's social housing for low income groups. They are also typical of the architect's use of concrete in construction, and of the off-street environment he preferred.
2. Condition of fabric: The complex is still structurally sound, due to the material of construction. The lack of care and maintenance, however gives a very deteriorated appearance.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions are 105'-8" x 75'-2". There were originally four apartment units, two on each side of the central court, which also contained the driveway.
2. Foundations: Concrete (reinforced).
3. Walls: Concrete walls covered with white stucco. Trim is painted green.
4. Structural system: Concrete (See item A, 5: "Original Plans and Construction, supra").
5. Porches: There are concrete porches at the entrances to each unit.

6. Chimneys: There are concrete chimneys (one per unit). These are located on the NE sides of the units on the SW side of the court, and on the NW sides of the units located on the NE side of the court.
  7. Openings:
    - a. Doorways and doors: There are five-panel doors on the entry porches. Service entrance doors also have five-panels.
    - b. Windows: Casement and fixed sash with hopper windows above. Each casement has only one glass panel.
  8. Roof:
    - a. Shape, covering: The roofs are flat, with slight slopes for drainage. They are covered with composition material.
    - b. Cornice, eaves: There is a very slight rise at the edges of the roof.
- C. Description of Interior:
1. Floor plans: Rooms are grouped around the entry and stair halls in each unit. The living rooms have fireplaces, and behind them are the dining rooms. Both living and dining rooms open to terraces in each unit. Opposite the living rooms from the halls are studies, or libraries. Behind these are a bathroom and the kitchen. There are service pantries between kitchens and dining rooms. On the second floors, there are two bedrooms - one over the living room, one over the library and entry hall. Between them, entered from the stairhall, is a bath. There is no second floor over the kitchen and dining rooms.
  2. Stairways: Each unit has an L-shaped stairway, with winders. Risers are 8-1/2" high, and treads are 13" wide.
  3. Flooring: Concrete slab floors.
  4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster on frame partitions and concrete walls (where load bearing); ceiling is the bottom of the concrete slabs. Ceilings in the second-story bedrooms above the libraries are of board.
  5. Openings: Miscellaneous panel doors (most five-panel), have been inserted to close off rooms to create the spaces now existing.

6. Decorative features: Tiled fireplaces in living rooms.
7. Hardware: None notable.
8. Mechanical equipment:
  - a. Heating: The only apparent source of heat was the fireplaces in the living rooms.
  - b. Lighting: Electric.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The complex faces Hollister Street to the NW. The flanking walls of the unites are blank. The apartments are located one-half block from the beach.
2. Landscape: The driveway through the court provides access to garages in the rear. Planting areas are somewhat ill-defined.
3. Outbuildings: Additional garage units were added to the rear of the complex in 1922.

Prepared by: Robert Giebner  
Project Supervisor  
HABS Los Angeles Team  
Summer 1968

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Interviews:

Interviewed E. McCoy with Louis Gill, FAIA, 22236 Ft. Stockton Road, San Diego; nephew, draftsman and short-time partner of Irving Gill; Lloyd Wright, Architect, draftsman in Gill's San Diego office, 855 N. Doheny Dr., Los angeles; R. M. Schindler, Architect, deceased, acquaintance of Gill's; Richard Neutra, AIA, 2300 Silver Lake Blvd., Los Angeles, acquainted with Gill; Eloise Roorbach, San Diego, a writer and a close friend of Gill's (interviewed 1956, then in her eighties, no present address).

B. Secondary and Published Sources:

Amerika, Richard Neutra, Schroll, Vienna, 1930, p. 49, p. 118.

Five California Architects, E. McCoy, Reinhold, N.Y. 1960.

Irving Gill, E. McCoy, Los Angeles County Museum, 1958.

Un Riformatore in California, E. McCoy, L'Architettura, Rome,  
December 1959, January 1960, February 1960.

Guide to Architecture in Southern California, Gebhard-Winter,  
University of California, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles County  
Museum, 1962.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This material was gathered as part of the 1968 HABS Los Angeles project. See drawing sheet 1 of 11 accompanying this written data for full project information.